

From: Speare, Geoff
To: 'Microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/16/02 2:17pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern,

This will be a short letter, as I'm sure you have many to go through. Let me say up front that as a computer user, programmer, and IT professional, I feel very strongly that the proposed Microsoft Settlement will do nothing to punish past monopolistic practices, or to prevent future violations of anti-trust law.

Most importantly, what the settlement fails to address is that Microsoft is /already/ entrenched in a dominant, monopolistic position, achieved in large part through unfair business practices. Creating a Technical Committee may (or may not) help with future problems, but does nothing to fix what has already transpired.

Lastly (for this letter; I do not pretend that I am addressing a majority of the problems with the settlement), I would point out that much of Microsoft's monopoly is maintained through mechanisms not mentioned in the settlement. For example, Microsoft Word is the dominant word processing software mainly because it's file format is proprietary and controlled by Microsoft -- and changed frequently, so that no other program can reliably use it. If a standard file format were enforced, competing products would have a chance to co-exist and interoperate with Word; something that just cannot happen today.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject this settlement and seek stronger action against Microsoft.

Geoff Speare
speareg@apci.com

+